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October 3, 1984

The Honorable Edward P. Boland, Chairman
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
H-405, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Boland:

I was General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency from its creation in 1947 until I retired in 1973. Every Director of Central Intelligence under whom I served recognized that the most important asset of the Agency was the people by which it was staffed. Accordingly it was essential that their problems be heard and responded to fairly and equitably. It appears to me that H.R. 5805 is strictly in accord with this principle of equity and should be enacted.

To my mind the objection to retroactive legislation is not valid when we are dealing with two groups essentially the same in composition and circumstances, but one group treated more generously than the other. From my experience the administrative burden would be minimal, particularly in view of the small number of people involved.

Again I recommend passage of this bill.

Respectfully,

Lawrence R. Houston